

THE GROUND-FLOOR ROOM

2nd annual
exhibition

October 14 to November 15, 1952

THE DOWNTOWN GALLERY

32 East 51 Street, New York City

THE GROUND-FLOOR ROOM: *after one year*

THE GROUND-FLOOR ROOM at The Downtown Gallery was inaugurated one year ago. The venture, purely experimental, has proven itself an established success. In the short interim the artists have been invited to national exhibitions, some being honored with full scale showings in important museums. Several have won prizes, fellowships, purchase awards. Beside the official recognition of museums, and the critical recognition of both mass and trade publications, the response of the public has been most gratifying. New collectors discovered they could obtain original and provocative works of art within a beginner's budget. Seasoned collectors enjoyed the adventure of further testing their taste. On all sides the experiment was acclaimed as a contribution toward strengthening the rapport between the professional artist and his public.

Both the development of the idea of The Ground-floor Room and the selection of the artists covered several years. Changing conditions in the art-world, the character of the new audience, as well as the wealth of talent developing across the country, necessitated planning along new lines. Recalling its introduction of a group of artists chosen from the Federal Arts Project in 1936, The Downtown Gallery decided once again to introduce several painters at once. Believing also that the younger artist needs security in order to develop his potentialities, the gallery instituted a plan of outright purchases, thus guaranteeing these artists a minimum sum each year. As a further expression of faith, the gallery agreed to an annually increased price for its guaranteed purchases.

In its 26 years of operation The Downtown Gallery has never sponsored an artist on a trial basis, testing the public's reaction with the showing of a few paintings. When, infrequently, a name was added to the roster it was always with the intention of forming a lasting relationship.

The gallery's enthusiasm was an expression of confidence and faith in the artist's future. Thus, invariably, great care has been exercised in the selection of artists. Because of the enormous number of talented young painters today, the choosing of the ten artists for The Ground-floor Room was especially stringent. These artists were discovered in varying ways. The gallery director travelled extensively, visiting studios, serving on juries where she saw thousands of paintings. The large annual museum exhibitions were carefully scrutinized. Hundreds of artists submitted work directly to the gallery. When tentatively interested in a painter, the gallery requested the submission of a retrospective group of paintings, so that the staff was accorded a view of the artist's work over a period of years. In all cases the gallery looked for a fresh approach, a personal contribution, a consistency of development, and aesthetic conviction.

In these confusing times, when amateur art and student work is being so highly promoted, it is this consistency and conviction which are the indelible marks of the professional. The artist for whom painting is a vocation works at his profession because of a driving urge to express, to communicate, his personal reaction to his environment. This gives his painting its unique direction, its style. Although he experiments from time to time, his growth, deriving from an inner compulsion, is generally logical and relevant. The youngster, the student, and the amateur may, now and then, execute an exceptional painting, but it is the professional whose output maintains a standard of quality. In choosing the artists, this consideration was paramount.

One year after their introduction the artists contributing to this exhibition fully justify their selection, as well as the security the gallery afforded them. Each has matured in gaining a deeper personal intensity and fuller expression. Each demonstrates the continuity of style and conception which is the badge of the serious, dedicated artist.

NEW PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE

- CARROLL CLOAR.....1 Three Million for December....Tempera
A
- HERBERT KATZMAN.....2 The Black Lobster.....Oil
A
- JONAH KINGSTEIN.....3 Three Figures.....Oil
A in A-
- WILLIAM KING.....4 HeadCeramic
A- A
- ROBERT KNIPSCHILD.....5 LoftEncaustic
A- 28
- WALTER MEIGS.....6 Winter Landscape.....Oil
A also a piece of sculpture
- CHARLES OSCAR.....7 Beach Scene.....Casein
A-
- ROBERT PREUSSER.....8 At Sea.....Oil
A-
- WALLACE REISS.....9 Blue Temple.....Oil
A

FLOYD JOHNSON is serving overseas in the Air Force.

A large selection available from \$25 to \$400